

**IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE**

## STATUS INQUIRY

Dear Sir or Madam:

On February 23, 2004, Applicant's undersigned attorney filed the above-referenced patent application with the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office. This application has been pending for 3 years without having received a first Office Action. Applicant hereby respectfully requests the Patent Office to notify Applicant as to the status of this matter, particularly when we can expect to receive a first Office Action.

Should any fees be required, the Commissioner of hereby authorized to charge such fees to Mevertons, Hood, Kivlin, Kowert & Goetzl PC Deposit Account No. 50-1505/5150-81401/JCH.

Respectfully submitted,

/Jeffrey C. Hood/

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